

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE
WOOD RIVER WATERSHED ADVISORY GROUP
TUESDAY, JUNE 22, 2004
FAIRFIELD, IDAHO**

Vice-Chairman Vernon Ravenscroft called the meeting with the following in attendance. Joe Schwarzbach, Carol Blackburn, Lynn Harmon, William Hazen, Clint Krahn, Mark Dallon, Chuck Pentzer, DEQ representatives Don Zaroban, Fish Biologist and Jennifer Claire and Secretary Dana Sturgeon.

Minutes: Minutes for May 25, 2004 were reviewed. Clint made the motion to accept the minutes as written. Carol seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote unanimous.

WAG Web Site: The web site committee was not able to attend so this was tabled until the next meeting.

Big Wood River Subbasin Implementation Strategies: Jennifer distributed a draft document from Dr. Buhidar concerning data on the TMDL Big Wood River Watershed Management Plan. The EPA approved it on May 15, 2002 and the Implementation Plan is due by December 31, 2004.

The implementation strategies for the Big Wood River Subbasin include the following:

1. A timeframe for meeting beneficial uses and/or water quality standards
2. The principal responsible parties for the overall water quality cleanup efforts
3. The strategies or approaches that will be used to achieve beneficial uses and/or water quality standards
4. The monitoring strategies that will provide the evidence that achievement of goals have been reached

The document is 30 pages and can be downloaded from the DEQ web site.

Jennifer said the WAG needs to start considering, for the TMDL, the storm water run off. We have to start incorporating it into the point source load allocation. In the past it has been part of the non-point source load.

We need to determine how much construction goes on within the Camas Subbasin and the Little Wood Subbasin.

She asked Lynn if there is a lot of Ag return (irrigation) that goes back into the Little Wood River or is it mostly sprinkler systems. Lynn felt there was not a tremendous amount of return. There is some between Richfield and Shoshone but it goes in and comes back out this time of year. There is not any return flow between Shoshone and Gooding. Bill thought there should be quite a bit of data from Richfield down to Shoshone. There was a study done in the 1990's by the NRCS in Shoshone, on return flows.

Wood River Sculpin: Don Zaroban, DEQ Fish Biologist, made a presentation on a study of the Wood River Sculpin. Freshwater Sculpin are sensitive to environmental disturbance and pollutants. In particular, freshwater Sculpin have been shown to be sensitive to sediments. The Wood River Sculpin is endemic to these three watersheds and is considered a sensitive species in these watersheds. This Sculpin is considered sensitive due to its restricted range, alteration and loss of habitat and introductions of non-native fishes. No range-wide survey has been conducted, therefore, the current range, magnitude of threats, ranging behavior, habitat use and status of Wood River Sculpin populations are undocumented.

WHY?

The DEQ is conducting this study to:

1. Support development and implementation of total maximum daily loads (TMDL's) in the Wood River basin.

2. Fill data gaps identified in previous conservation assessments.
3. Prevent the need to list the Wood River Sculpin under the Endangered Species Act.

WHAT?

Basic biological information is needed. We propose to:

1. Document occurrence and gather habitat data
2. Develop a predictive model based on habitat and watershed features
3. Investigate ranging behavior
4. Integrate these findings through an aquatic GAP Analysis to support conservation management

WHERE?

Wood River Sculpin exist only in the Wood River basin of south-central Idaho.

1. Big Wood River, Camas Creek and Little Wood River watersheds

WHEN?

We anticipate this study will last approximately three years.

1. 2004 to 2007

WHO?

The following groups are, or have expressed an interest in, participating:

1. State of Idaho, Department of Environmental Quality
2. U.S. Bureau of Land Management
3. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
4. University of Idaho
5. Sawtooth National Forest
6. Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History, Albertson College of Idaho
7. Other interested parties: The Nature Conservancy, Idaho Office of Species Conservation, Lava Lake

Land and

Livestock Company, Wood River Land Trust, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Geological Survey

GAP Analysis Program.

Don discussed how the study will be done and answered questions. The accuracy of the study was addressed due to variable stream flows.

The next meeting will be held in Carey at 7:30 P.M. on July 27, 2004. The meeting for August was set for the 24th at 7:30 P.M. in Fairfield.

Carol made the motion to adjourn. Clint seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote unanimous. Whereupon the meeting was adjourned.

Daryle James
Chairman